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Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Prayer rallies rolling into February

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

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Since the first Covering Mississippi in Prayer rallies of January 3 in Woodville, Liberty, Meadville and Natchez, through the rallies on January 25 in Canton, Raymond, Jackson, and Brandon, thousands of people have had the opportunity to gather on courthouse lawns, in church buildings, in city parks, and other venues.

February is next on the agenda as the three-month goal of conducting a Covering Mississippi in Prayer rally in each of Mississippi's counties rolls on. Counties with two county seats will have multiple rallies for a total of 90 rallies statewide by the end of March.

"As I tell people, God is not overly impressed with us just beating the drum and getting crowds together," said Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson. "What is amazing to me is that crowds come in 20-degree weather and 30-mile-per-hour winds, or stand in Bolivar County at ten o'clock in the morning in the drizzling rain, and they are there in the cold and wet for this event, and everywhere we go, people say, 'Thank you for coming. We need this.'"

"One person said, 'I think there is a tremendous hunger in people across the land, and especially in Mississippi, for a chance to say, 'God, we need you.' That's the reason people are coming to these rallies.'"

"There is a spirit of 'oneness' that has permeated each prayer rally," said Steve Stone, MBCB associate executive director for church growth and the Covering Mississippi in Prayer coordinator. "Jesus

prayed in His high priestly prayer in John 17:21 that we all may be one. I believe we are experiencing the fulfillment of that prayer in Mississippi."

"I try to make the point over and over that the rallies are not the high water mark of prayer," said Futral. "It's every morning as thousands of people are joining together to pray across the state and what God is doing in response to their cries, but it's also what He's doing as their hearts turn toward Him. There is not one of the rallies that hasn't left an incredible mark in my own life."

Hundreds attended the rallies in Cleveland, Indianola, and Greenwood. "Given the day and the rain, the rallies went very, very well," said Tommy Williamson, missions director for Mid-Delta Association in Cleveland. "All of our pastors were pleased with it. There was a great response with people asking for the pins. For our county commissioners and some of our supervisors, this was a new idea for them. They really did enjoy the event."

Williamson said a Methodist pastor in Sunflower County told him, "This is wonderful. We need to get in on this."

"We gave him a pin and a card," said Williamson, "and we'll do some follow up."

Williamson also said, "There was a sense of excitement and even of awe. There was a sense of challenge — that people would step up to the plate and pray. Several of the churches I spoke to Sunday said, 'We missed the rally but we want pins and we want to commit to being part of this.'"

"I find the spirit of it just growing, and people are praying for Dr. Futral and others that are involved in the rallies every week. It doesn't seem like the weather hampered things at all."

Archie Herrin, missions director for Tri-County Association in Columbia, was equally as enthusiastic. "I just feel that God is really up to something," he said. "Out of the three rallies (in Tri-County Association), there are 1,260 people who have made commitments to pray daily — and there are a lot of people who haven't turned in cards yet."

"There is a sense of expectancy that God is going to honor our prayers. We expect that He is going to do things in our association. For instance, we are looking toward starting an African-American ministry and a Hispanic ministry coming as an outgrowth of some of our prayers. I'm overwhelmed at how our churches have responded. I've been asked to lead in some of the commitment services at our churches."

"In every prayer rally thus far, I have heard people praying for revival," said Stone. "We may very well see the unfolding of 2 Chronicles 7:14 in Mississippi."

"This is becoming so much more than just an engaging, inspirational gathering," said Futral. "It's not just the people at the rally, but how the spirit exponentially spreads as they go back to their churches. The ripple of what takes place day after day, at times looks like a tsunami."

For more information on the Covering Mississippi in Prayer campaign, including local times, dates, and locations, visit www.mbc.org and click on 2011 Associational Prayer Rallies. Local associational missions directors can also be contacted as well as Steve Stone at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3310 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 310. E-mail: sbell@mbcb.org.



Greene County February 1, 2011 11 AM	Greene County Courthouse 400 Main St Leakesville 39451	Carroll County February 7, 2011 Noon	Carroll County Courthouse 600 Lexington St Carrollton 38917	Tallahatchie County February 9, 2011 Noon	Tallahatchie Admin. Office S Square St Charleston, MS 38921
George County February 1, 2011 2 PM	George County Courthouse Square 355 Cox St 200 Courthouse Square Lucedale 39452	Carroll County February 7, 2011 2 PM	Carroll County Courthouse 803 Front St Vaiden 39176	Tallahatchie County February 9, 2011 2 PM	Tallahatchie Co. Courthouse 401 West Court Street Sumner 38957
Jackson County February 1, 2011 4 PM	Beach Park 600 City Park St—Beach Blvd Pascagoula 39567	Panola County February 8, 2011 10 AM	Pavilion on the Square (Downtown) 133 Public Square Batesville 38606	Holmes County February 10, 2011 9 AM	Holmes County Courthouse 200 Court Sq Lexington 39095
Chickasaw County February 3, 2011 11 AM	Mini Park Corner Main & N. Olive St. Okolona 38860	Yalobusha County February 8, 2011 Noon	Yalobusha County Courthouse 201 Blackmur Dr Water Valley 38965	Humphreys County February 10, 2011 11 AM	Humphreys County Courthouse 102 Cappleman St Belzoni 39038
Chickasaw County February 3, 2011 2 PM	Chickasaw County Courthouse One Pinson Square Houston 38851	Yalobusha County February 8, 2011 2 PM	Yalobusha County Courthouse 14400 Main St Hwy 330 Coffeeville 38922	Washington County February 10, 2011 2 PM	Greenville City Hall 340 Main St Greenville 38701
Montgomery County February 7, 2011 10 AM	Montgomery Co. Courthouse 614 Summit Street Winona 38967	Grenada County February 9, 2011 10 AM	Grenada County Courthouse 16 1st Street Grenada 38901	Attala County February 22, 2011 9 AM	Attala County Courthouse 230 W. Washington St Kosciusko 39090



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The baby charnel houses



Amazingly, there are still those among us who would defend abortion as some noble cause to benefit both a woman who doesn't want a child and a child who would otherwise be brought into an overcrowded and inhumane world. Even more amazingly, these same people hold up as selfless heroes the butchers masquerading as doctors who would perform such a procedure on a desperate woman and her defenseless child.

Those people never met Kermit Barron Gosnell, MD.

When authorities raided Gosnell's West Philadelphia (Pa.) abortion clinic in a search for illegal drug activity, they discovered a literal shop of horrors. Strewn about the clinic amid bloody recliners and unsanitary equipment, and clogging nearly every drain in the building, were human body parts — mangled pieces of unborn babies, actually — in various stages of decay.

The Pennsylvania State Department of Health, which along with other state agencies and licensing boards had been sitting on complaints about Gosnell since at least 2001, finally sprung into action. Horrifying doesn't begin to describe what they found.

Gosnell apparently did not even employ a nurse at the clinic for long stretches of time. That didn't stop the abortions, however, as he ordered unqualified and unlicensed employees to administer narcotics and other drugs to the mothers. There are allegations that he allowed those same employees to perform abortions when he was not available.

Gosnell is also alleged to have delivered full-term, viable babies and then severed their spinal cords with a pair of scissors. He is alleged to have even bragged to one employee who had just witnessed this brutality that the child was so big that he "could walk me to the bus stop." For some twisted reason known only to Gosnell, he cut off the feet of unborn babies and kept them in jars around the clinic.

Gosnell is being held without bail, charged with the deaths of one adult woman who came to the clinic for an abortion, and seven of the babies who died after their spinal cords were cut in two at the clinic. A number of his employees have also been charged with offenses ranging from murder to drug violations.

A grand jury that investigated Gosnell and his operation described the clinic as a "baby charnel house." The grand jury also had an explanation for why state and local regulators had ignored years of complaints and reports of abuse at the clinic: "...because the women in question were poor and of color, because the victims were infants without identities, and because the subject was the political football of abortion."

Gosnell is hardly alone among the fraternity of abortion providers. Since abortion during all nine months of gestation was legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973, there have been thousands of reports of filthy clinics, violations of federal and state laws, barbaric acts committed on both mother and child, abortions performed on minors without parental permission, mistreatment of children born alive during botched abortions, unqualified employees perforating the mother's internal organs with sharp instruments, and the coverup of questionable deaths, to name only a few of the outrages.

In many abortion clinics, there is a disassembly line in place where freshly aborted babies are handed over to employees of a third party company to be dissected and sold for their body parts. The ABC television network news show 20/20 several years ago exposed just such an operation, called Opening Lines, that provided fetal tissue and organs for experimentation.

Well-paid lawyers, lobbyists, and politicians with perfect hair and perfect teeth have tried to convince us since the beginning that abortion was not only necessary but often the only recourse. They have tried to convince us that abortion clinics are as sound as any other clinic, and that abortion doctors are a misunderstood and persecuted lot.

Don't believe it. Kermit Barron Gosnell, and thousands like him, are living proof that it isn't true. Just open your eyes.

GUEST OPINION:

When the decision was mine...

By Joanna Miley King
Hattiesburg



This past Sunday was Sanctity of Human Life Sunday for many churches in America. While it is something we recognize, and something we advocate for other people to respond to and make moral choices accordingly, the moment of choice is very rarely in our own hands.

I had that moment.

I was outside playing with the dog and my husband Joe was doing housework on Oct. 11 last year when the home phone rang. Joe opened the back door and handed me the second handset as he held the first, and said, "It's our adoption agent, Mary."

My heart stopped. On Aug. 10, we had accepted a referral for a set of twin girls in Russia that were a year old. We were only about three weeks from traveling to St. Petersburg to meet them for the first time.

Mary said, "The girls were taken to a pediatrician for checkups. Olga checked out fine but Diana is still so behind developmentally that they did some further tests with her, and they think she has cerebral palsy. There's no way of knowing as young as she is how severe this is going to be, and how it is going to affect her in the long run."

"Take some time. Take a week to think about it, to talk to

pediatricians or specialists. Talk to your social worker and then you can let us know what you want to do."

"What do you mean, what we want to do?" I asked.

"You can ask for a new referral if you want to wait for another set of siblings," Mary said, "or you can just take Olga. The ministry of education will probably separate the girls' registrations so at least Olga will have a chance at a normal life, because a Russian family will not adopt a child with special needs. Or you can take them both."

My interpretation of what she was saying was that if the girls were going to get to stay together, we were their only chance. Otherwise, they would be separated. Mary told me not to feel guilty if we chose to only take Olga, because Diana would get great care.

"Of course, nothing compares to what would happen if she were with a family," Mary said.

So here was our moment of choice. Take the healthy one, take them both, or wait for a new referral. Joe and I sat on the couch, and I cried while he prayed for the courage to do what we knew in our hearts was right by God's Word and by our own convictions.

Had we been pregnant and heard this news, we'd see that pregnancy through and love that child and provide everything she needed to thrive to her fullest potential. Our decision was made immediately. The prayers and thoughts that came after that phone call with Mary were for courage, for provision, for understanding of people who would be involved in her care.

After four weeks of visits, court appointments, and paper-

work being filled out in Russia, we came back to our hotel room in Moscow after our exit interview at the U.S. Embassy. It was nap time for the girls, and I held a sleepy Russian princess in my arms. Diana, now Anna Claire, nestled into the crook of my elbow and pulled her little balled up hand to her face as she closed her eyes to sleep.

I sat by the window watching snow fall, and let the tears flow freely. Joe walked over and touched my shoulder. "Is everything OK?" he asked.

"We could have missed this," I said.

By the grace of God, the prayers of His people, and the guidance of His Word, we didn't. We jumped in courageously to accept the chance to love a little girl who may take more effort, more money, more time, and more patience to raise because we believed her life, like the life of all children, of all senior adults, of all marginalized people, is precious to her Heavenly Father.

She's pretty precious to us, too.

King is a music teacher in the Lamar County School System. Her husband Joe is student minister at Immanuel Church in Hattiesburg. Visit their website at www.lovelylittlefootsteps.com.

Gospel may prosper because of Sudan vote

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP) — Nearly 99% of the southern Sudanese who voted in the referendum on independence have chosen to split from the Arab-dominated north, according to preliminary results reported Jan. 21.

More than three million ballots have been counted to date by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission. Official results are expected in February, but if the vote is confirmed, the new country of Southern Sudan is set to formally declare independence on July 9.

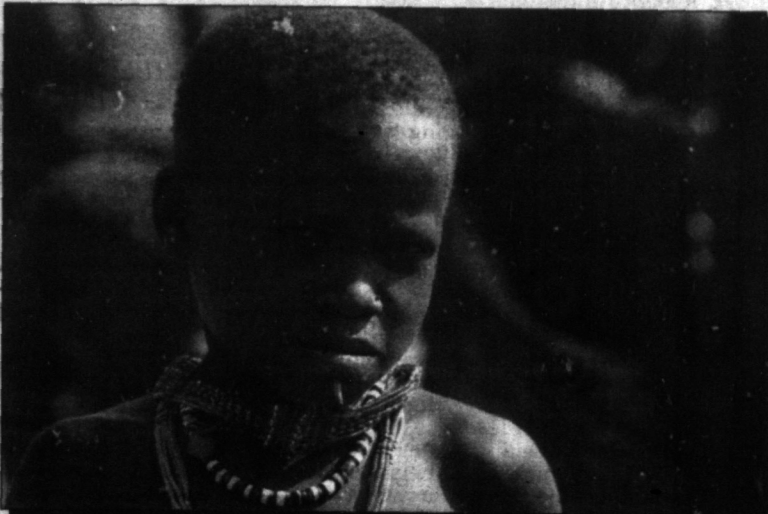
While many southern Sudanese already have begun celebrating the huge vote in favor of independence, some are still struggling to understand what it all means. The rural Toposa people are one such group.

Life among the Toposa resembles what many Americans visualize about the African bush: mud houses in

small villages, dirt roads, lack of education, no technology of which to speak. They number about 800,000. They communicate orally; fewer than three percent can read.

They're trying to absorb the revolutionary idea of being part of a new country.

Missionaries Shannon and Carrie Lewis are church planters and community developers, living and working among the Toposa through the International Mission Board. Many of their Toposa neighbors registered to vote but have asked the Lewises questions about the referendum and what a new country could mean for them.



AWAITING NEWS — This young boy, a member of the Toposa people in Sudan, doesn't yet understand the historic events swirling around him, but he might become a citizen of the world's newest nation, Southern Sudan, if a recent referendum in the region affirms its birth. (BP photo)

"They are really not sure what is going on, and they really don't understand what is happening with the referendum," Shannon said. "For them, this is just something different and new."

News media reported skirmishes along the north-south Sudanese border during the weeklong referendum vote Jan. 9-15, but many international observers have complimented Sudan on the overall fairness of the vote.

Sudan has been ravaged by decades of civil war between the heavily Islamic north and the predominantly Christian and animist south. Millions have been killed or displaced. Sudanese Christians hope a new country will provide religious freedom and equality.

The Lewises, along with their three sons, have ministered to the Toposa for nearly two years. They have relied solely on oral presentations of the Gospel, using methods like chronological Bible storying for evangelism and discipleship.

The Toposa stay busy during the day tending to cattle and gardens, so the Lewises usually visit people after dark, when villagers have finished work and their evening meal. "That's the time families can gather together with

us to learn more about the Word of God," Shannon said.

In a recent blog post (www.toposafamily.blogspot.com), Carrie wrote: "God is doing great things here in Sudan. We are so excited to be part of the work that He is doing. In the last two months, there have been 42 new baptized believers. The Toposa people are now eager to hear God's Word and are responding to Him."

Nine Toposa leaders have emerged from the Christian believers who meet to worship and pray. Many use a "Proclaimer," an audio Bible, to listen to God's Word in their small groups and discuss what they have heard.

"When I go through the villages, sometimes I can hear the Word of God being spoken by the people in their language," Shannon said. "That is very exciting."

If a new nation is established, the Lewises hope it will open the door to a rapid expansion of evangelism and church planting. "Pray for the whole country of Sudan," Shannon said, "that God will give them discernment and that there will come forth leaders that can move the country forward in the next steps after the referendum."

Looking back

10 years ago

The third year of Mississippi's involvement in the National Fishers of Men tournament kicks off at Ross Barnett Reservoir Feb. 3.

20 years ago

As Operation Desert Shield becomes Operation Desert Storm, Southern Baptist chaplains move to the front lines of comfort and conflict. Before the battles begin in the Persian Gulf, chaplains report between 800 and 1200 professions of faith and multiple Bible studies started.

50 years ago

The board of trustees of Clarke Memorial College adopt a million dollar program of expansion for the college, the most ambitious program in Clarke's 53 year history.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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VOL. 135

No. 4



YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

BIBLIOPHER

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
© 2005

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Clue: W = R

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Five: One

STAFF CHANGES

1. Mt. Olive Church, Baldwyn, has called David Haynes as pastor effective Sept. 1, 2010. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and is originally from Corinth. He is shown with his wife April and daughter Taylor.



1. The Haynes

PRAYER POINTS - PRAYING FOR SELF

As we cover Mississippi in Prayer, we encourage you to begin your prayer time each day by looking at yourself. I am not encouraging you to just dwell on what you want, what you need, or on trying to figure out how you can verbalize to God what He ought to be doing about some dilemma. Surely, He cares about every one of us and He cares about the depths of our needs. He cares about the smallest things in our lives, but mainly our focus on self is to say, "God, come and examine my heart." As the Psalmist said, "And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:24). Lord, come and help me deal with the things that keep me from being what you want me to be.

It is actually not easy to see yourself with the needs that may be there. There are blind spots in all of us. There is a warped perception that we have of ourselves as opposed to others. We just do not see ourselves as we are, but God can help to reveal to us things that we need to work on and things that we need to let Him work on. I think about the old couple that came into a restaurant and sat down at a booth. As they sat down, the man said to his wife, "Don't look now but when you get a chance, look down the way at the old couple sitting down there in the booth. I think we are supposed to know them." In a little while, very discreetly, the wife took a look to see who they were. She turned back to her husband and he said, "Do you know who they are?" The wife sweetly said, "You do know that



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Prayer Points

there is a mirror on the wall down there." It was him, it was them, but he could not quite figure out why they looked so old.

Sometimes when we begin to look at self, God begins to reveal things about us that we may not see. Others may see them, but we do not. Sometimes nobody sees them but they are there. God sees the distortions, flaws, and the sin that He alone can turn the spotlight on and reveal to us.

Begin praying for self externally. When I say externally, I am talking about the connectedness or disconnectedness you have with the world around you. You may become aware of something that you do as you speak, as you lead, or as you see other people that has become very detrimental to the Lord being able to use you. There may be damaged relationships that are impeding your walk with the Lord. There may be dysfunctional things that if you chose to do so, you could actually change at work, at home, at church, with friends, or even when encountering persons you do not know. Are there things externally in those connections that God would bring to the forefront for you to deal with?

Secondly, look at yourself internally. Here things look

quite different and here is where we begin more than any other place to get into trouble. We may not want to see the truth about ourselves internally. This is the problem. The line gets blurred in our own thought process. We may externally show one thing and internally know that we are driven by a different motivation than we would want anybody to know. We want to cling to what we have said or done externally and what we want others to believe. Internally, things are not that way at all.

The only problem with that is that there are two people who know differently. One is the Lord and the other is yourself when you are honest enough to admit it to yourself. Maybe this is part of the reason why Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). We do not recognize how our motives, feelings, and attitudes shape our outward expressions. We want to think that we do, but we do not.

I am reminded of the story that Christiana Barnard told about one of the early heart transplant patients that he had. While sitting in his office, the patient asked Barnard if it would be possible for him

to see his old heart. The doctor could not think of any legitimate reason not to and so he went in and got the heart that was in a jar with formaldehyde. He sat it down on the desk in front of his patient. As the man looked at the heart, Barnard said he realized that this was the first man in all of history to look at his own heart. Of course, it was no longer beating or useful. When it comes to our spiritual dimension, we may not see or fully understand the internals of what is taking place in us. God can help us to see and clarify what is taking place.

So what do you do when God through His Word and through His presence in your heart shows you that there are things in your life that need to be changed, cleansed, or challenged? There is only one thing to do. Submit to Him and allow Him to begin working in a new direction. You know that He will never lead you in the wrong way and as you begin to take steps with Him and for Him, you will find that each morning's meeting will be a mini celebration. Life will be more meaningful as each day unfolds.

The author can be contacted at
jfutral@mbcb.org.



MS POSITIONS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW ALBANY, MS is seeking to fill the Organist position. Please contact the church office at 662-534-5812, if you are interested.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, BRAXTON, MS is currently accepting resumes for a bi-vocational Minister of Youth. Please send resumes to: Calvary Baptist Church, Youth Search Committee, P. O. Box 111, Braxton, Ms. 39044 or resumes@calvaryofbraxton.com.

JUNIPER GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking a Part-time Minister of Music. Resumes can be emailed to junipergrovebc@gmail.com or mailed to 289 Juniper Grove Road, Poplarville, Ms. 39470. For more information please call 601-795-8886.

AUBURN BAPTIST CHURCH IN TUPELO, MS is currently accepting resumes for the position of part-time Minister of Music. Resumes can be sent to 1138 City Rd. 931, Tupelo, MS 38804 or emailed to jhenry@auburnbaptistchurch.org. The church's phone number is (662)842-5638.

PINEVIEW BAPTIST CHURCH IN CLINTON, MS is searching for a part-time bi-vocational youth minister. Please send resumes to pineviewbc@bellsouth.net or you can fax to 601-924-8378. If you have any questions, please call 601-924-7677.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OCEAN SPRING, MS is seeking to fill the full-time position of Student and Adult Discipleship Minister. Send resumes or inquiries to fbccs@fbccs.org or mail to First Baptist Church, ATTN: Search Committee, 602 Washington Ave. Ocean Springs, MS 39564. The Church phone number is call 228-875-4532.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 27, 2011

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Special three month prayer emphasis for HouseTops

"These all continued in one accord in prayer..." Acts 1:14 KJV

2011 MBCB Emphasis Covering MS in Prayer Associational Prayer Rallies

Tuesday, February 1

- Leakesville - 11 a.m.
- Lucedale - 2 p.m.
- Pascagoula - 4 p.m.

Thursday, February 3

- Okolona - 11 a.m.
- Houston - 2 p.m.

Monday, February 7

- Winona - 10 a.m.
- Carrollton - noon
- Vaiden - 2 p.m.

Tuesday, February 8

- Batesville - 10 a.m.
- Water Valley - noon
- Coffeeville - 2 p.m.

Wednesday, February 9

- Grenada - 10 a.m.
- Charleston - noon
- Sumner - 2 p.m.

Prayer request focus for participants at rallies and for yourself.

1. SELF

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me..." Psalm 66:18

2. SERVANTS

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." 1 Timothy 2:1-2

3. SOULS

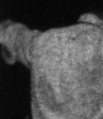
"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word..." John 17:20

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matthew 23:37



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE

All music ministers, accompanists, musicians, and college students in church music are encouraged to attend.



Registration begins at 12 p.m.
Mississippi Singing Churchmen Rehearsal at 4 p.m.
Conference begins at 4 p.m. Thursday with regular session, and ends after the banquet Friday evening.

Church Music Department: 601-292-3267 or palford@mbcb.org

February 10-11, 2011
Morrison Heights BC
Clinton, Miss.

7th Annual SENIOR ADULT EVANGELISM RALLY

Tuesday, February 1, 2011
Northcrest Baptist Church, Meridian

Special Guests:

Mickey Bounds, Cajun Pastor from Delhi, La.
Gary Mayfield, Mississippi College, Professor
Tom Crocker, LifeWay Consultant, Nashville
Music: Larry Black, Richland
Preacher: Claude King, Nashville

For more information:

E-mail gshows@mbcb.org,
or dbrashier@mbcb.org

Call-1-800-748-1651 or
601-292-3373.

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The following is a listing of contributions made to the Lord's work which were processed through the Business Office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board from January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010. An * denotes a gift from the association. If you have any questions about the amounts reported for your church, please contact the Business Office at 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.

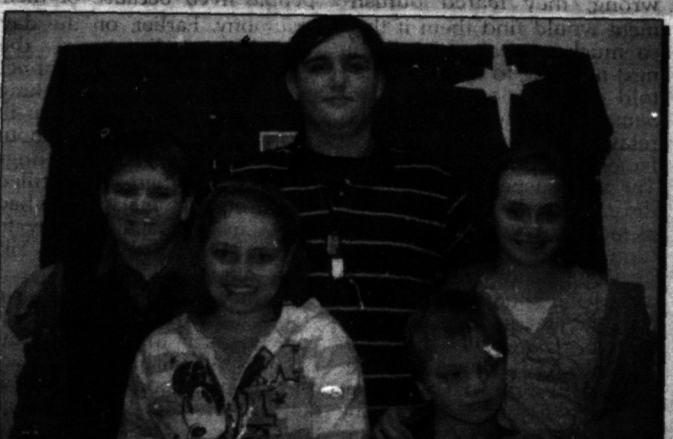
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1. Atkins presentation



2. Mt. Pisgah Church, Carrollton



3. Kreole Avenue Church, Jackson Association



4. Fair River Church, Brookhaven



Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, has presented Sam Atkins his 58th year perfect attendance pin. Shown are preschool director Patty Robey, Atkins, and Sunday School director Ed Page.

Mt. Pisgah Church, Carrollton, held a deacon ordination Jan. 16. Shown, from left, are Carolyn and Lester Campbell; pastor Lanny Haley; and Edward Melvin Corder with wife, Ann.

Kreole Avenue Church, Jackson Association, began 2011 with five baptisms. Shown, front, are Veronica Tucker and Riley Tillman; back, Jaeden Ridgeway, Brandon Tucker, and Rabaka Tucker.

Fair River Church, Brookhaven, presented Jerry and Bobbie Rankin a plaque commemorating 40 years of missionary service. Shown are pastor David Fortenberry and the Rankins.

Big Level Church, Wiggins, recently sponsored meeting and eating facilities for a disabled group of outdoors people Jan. 14 and 15. Shown are the participants.

First Church, Boyle, held a commissioning service Jan. 16 for Robert and Sue Carney, who are leaving to missionaries to West Africa. Shown are Tommy Williamson, the Carneys, Sandra Edwards and Clarence Edwards.

Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, is hosting a community singing Feb. 19, 6 p.m., featuring the Temple Baptist Quartet.

Mt. Manna Church, Coldwater, is presenting Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames Feb. 20, 6 p.m., and Feb. 21-22, 7 p.m.

Poplar Springs Church, Hazlehurst, will host a 5th Sunday singing Jan. 30, 10:30 a.m., followed by a potluck lunch. Shallow Creek gospel bluegrass group will be featured.

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5. Big Level Church, Wiggins



6. First Church, Boyle

COLLEGE NEWS

Two William Carey University Spanish professors were recently elected as presidents of professional organizations. Cheryl Maqueda, assistant professor of Spanish, was elected president of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). Yohanna Jimenez, adjunct professor of Spanish, was named Mississippi Foreign Language Association (MFLA) president.

William Carey University Coach Steve Knight achieved a landmark during the 2010 basketball season as the coach with the most wins at an institution in Mississippi basketball history. Knight, who started as a graduate assistant for WCU's baseball and basketball teams in 1981, began as head men's basketball coach in the summer of 1982 at the age of 25. He is in his 27th season as basketball coach, and his teams have compiled over 450 victories and thirteen 20+ win seasons. His basketball teams have also captured six GCAC championships, six District 30 championships, and competed in seven NAIA national tournaments.



1a. Jimenez



1b. Maqueda



2. Knight

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

A Lifestyle of Meditation

Psalm 1:1-6; Psalm 119:11-16; Mark 1:35-39

By Becky Brown

Community, humility, service and sacrifice: we have just completed four weeks of lifestyle lessons on Who we should follow and how we should travel and where we should land. This week, we board the flight and take our seat to begin the journey. The logo on the side of our aircraft reads "MEDITATION." This one flight plan pilots us surely and securely to all four lifestyle destinations.

Psalm One describes the godly man as one who delights in the law of the Lord and who meditates in that law day and night. Psalm 135 describes the worthless idols of pagan nations and the futility of those who delight in them. These idols are constructed by the hands of fallen, sinful human beings. They are made from

materials and elements created by God. They have mouths that can't speak, eyes that can't see, and ears that can't hear. No breath of life is present within them. They are dead. The Psalmist assures readers that those who construct them will become like them for we truly become like that which we worship. Psalm 119:11-16 challenges us to treasure the Word of God in our hearts, to learn to delight in the statutes of the Lord, to tell of His ordinances, to rejoice in His testimonies, to meditate on His precepts, to regard His ways and to promise never to forget His Word.

Why would anyone worship idle idols? Worship God! Treasure His Word! Spend time with Him! Those who fail to worship God and meditate on Him and His Word are self-



Brown

focused and powerless. They will be separated from community. They will be strangers to humility. They will have no clue about how to serve. They will be ignorant of sacrifice. If we do not style our lives after Christ, we have no life at all.

My favorite Bible teacher, Anne Graham Lotz, begins her public prayers with the phrase, "...and now, Father..." Her outstretched hands, her humbled countenance and her tender, personally familiar address testify to me that she walks in an attitude of constant contact with her Lord. Anne doesn't punctuate her life with designated times of prayer and meditation. She assimilates her times of prayer and meditation with her life. I long for and have determined to pursue that same walk with my Lord.

There is a very fine line between worship and meditation. Both activities (lifestyles) involve focus. On the first day

of the week, we come together to corporately worship the Lord as a church family. All week long, we can continue to enjoy and recall our time together as we meditate on the truths and savor them over again through daily personal worship. Such times of meditation prepare us for our next gathering of worship and help us maintain an attitude of worship day by day, moment by moment.

When we enjoy our favorite food, we anticipate the smell. We enjoy the taste and we savor the flavor of it as it goes down. Psalm 34:8 admonishes us to taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed are those who take refuge in Him. Even a quiet time can become merely a scheduled activity of futility. Meditation is a frame of mind and an attitude of heart.

Jesus designed us for community. Jesus demonstrated humility. Jesus modeled the lifestyle of service. Jesus became our sacrifice and left us here to be daily, living sacrifices. Jesus also proved to His disciples that being in deliber-

ate contact with God conforms us to His purpose and connects us to His plan. In Mark 1:35 we see Jesus rising long before daylight to draw apart and spend time in prayer with His Father. In this digital age, our "stuff-fix-ta-cation" practically eliminates meditation. What is blocking your view of God and blurring your focus? That is your idol. Whatever keeps you from spending time with the Father is your enemy, even if it is yourself.

Painting word/song pictures brings me great joy. I search for images people can read with their eyes or hear with their ears and digest in their hearts. Two consonants distinguish the word meditation from the word medication. The "c" in medication stands for the Christ who died on the center "t" for you and me. Think on these things. As you meditate on God and His truths, He will meditate what ails you and through you provide healing for others.

Brown is staff evangelist at First Church, Richland.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Right Not to Remain Silent

2 Kings 7:3-9, 12-13, 15-16a

By Dr. W. Wayne VanHorn

I am a Christian. God saved me by His grace when I put my faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. To put it another way, the Lord has been too good to me for me to remain silent about His grace. It is right not to remain silent. In this week's lesson, we will look at the Lord's deliverance of Samaria from siege and famine. This story will provide insights into the appropriateness of sharing God's good news. Hopefully we will be encouraged to assist others in learning the good news about what God has done.

Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom, Israel. Throughout her brief 200 year history, 922-722 B.C., Israel was involved in many border skirmishes with the neighboring nations. Victory in these skirmishes for control went to whatever nation had

the upper hand militarily. Aram (Syria), a perennial enemy, was just north of Israel. Benhadad, king of Aram, besieged Samaria (2 Kings 6:24-7:20). This week's lesson is set against the backdrop of that siege.

We are told of four lepers, men with hideous skin diseases that made them outcasts. Sitting at the gate, they contemplated their future. "Why stay here until we die?" (2 Kings 7:3; NIV). Death awaited them inside the besieged city due to famine; death also awaited them as they sat at the gate. They decided to take a chance and go to the Aramean camp in hopes of finding food and water. The worse case scenario was that the Arameans would kill them; at least death would come swiftly.

The four lepers approached Aram's camp at nightfall. To



VanHorn

their surprise, the camp was empty, not a soldier anywhere (2 Kings 7:5). Where had everyone gone? The Lord terrified the Arameans, making them hear sounds of an overwhelming army. The Arameans fled in fear, abandoning their food, water, and supplies (2 Kings 7:6-7).

The four lepers found themselves in an instant reversal of fortunes. They had all they needed to eat and drink. They also found silver, gold, and clothes, which they hid for themselves (2 Kings 7:8). A short distance away, the inhabitants of Samaria were starving to death in a city besieged by an enemy that since had fled the battlefield. The truth of the moment struck the lepers. They told one another, "We're not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves" (2 Kings 7:9; NIV). God never intends His good news to be for the exclusive benefit of a handful of people. Those who

experience God's deliverance need to assist others in learning what God has done. Hopefully, they will get "in on" what God is "up to."

The four lepers were so convinced keeping God's good news to themselves was wrong, they feared punishment would find them if they so much as waited until the next morning to share. So they told the good news to Samaria's gatekeepers, who relayed the information to Israel's king and household. The king suspected a trap and did not accept the good news at face value (2 Kings 7:12). A thoughtful servant suggested the king send messengers to assess the situation. The messengers saw evidence of the Aramean retreat in the form of clothing and equipment jettisoned in their hasty retreat toward the Jordan River. The messengers reported their findings to the king (2 Kings 7:15). As a result, the inhabitants of Samaria were able to get flour and barley in abundance at little or no cost (2 Kings 7:16).

By terrifying the Arameans and forcing them to abandon their food and supplies, the Lord had miraculously provided for the inhabitants of Samaria to live. Four lepers became the evangelists of God's good news and many people lived because of their testimony. Earlier, on the day the lepers discovered the empty camp, the prophet Elisha had predicted to the king that food would sell cheap in famine-stricken Samaria, about that time tomorrow (2 Kings 7:1). As the Samaritans filled their empty stomachs, God had acted in a miraculous way to uphold His word through His faithful prophet.

What about us? Are we faithful to trust the Lord without regard to our circumstances like Elisha did? Will we share God's good news like the four lepers did, knowing that doing so will result in many people finding God? Surely it is right not to be silent.

Van Horn is Dean of Christian Studies and the Arts at Mississippi College.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

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THE BAPTIST
Record

SBC president: CP 'radical reprioritization' needed

Final in a series

NASHVILLE, Tn. (BP) — The December/January edition of SBC LIFE includes an interview with Southern Baptist Convention President Bryant Wright, who also serves as pastor of Johnson Ferry Church in Marietta, Ga. Following is a transcript of the interview, which took place Sept. 21 following his address to the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville. In the interest of continuity, the first SBC LIFE question below was the final question from last week's part one of the series.

SBC LIFE: Currently, almost 95% of Cooperative Program (CP) funds received by the Executive Committee go to fund the International Mission Board (IMB), North American Mission Board (NAMB), and the six seminaries. You are on record saying that your church divides its support for SBC ministries at five percent to CP and five percent directly to IMB. If Southern Baptists across the land follow the example of Johnson Ferry, some are concerned that funding for these other ministries could be dramatically impacted. Given what you have led your church to do, what would you say to pastors concerning the priority of funding IMB, NAMB, and seminary training through the Cooperative Program?

WRIGHT: Well, the reason Johnson Ferry has chosen to give equally through the Cooperative Program and directly to the IMB is so we can give more to international missions. But we definitely know the seminaries need more money. They are training the future leadership of our churches for carrying out the Great Commission in our churches and on the mission field. Certainly we want to be a part of that. Our burden is how much is staying in the states, especially in the Bible Belt states where there are so many SBC churches. But we certainly don't want to leave the seminaries and NAMB out of the equation.

SBC LIFE: So, with that in mind, what do you say to pastors as far as encouraging them to support the ministries of IMB and NAMB and seminaries?

WRIGHT: Obviously, the Cooperative Program is our flagship of overall mission support. That is the genius that started in 1925, and we certainly want to continue to support it. I just think there needs to be a radical reprioritization of the Cooperative Program funding so that more winds up going out of the states.

SBC LIFE: If the CP is restructured this way, state conventions obviously are going to have to reduce some of their ministries. Currently, some of the key ministries in state conventions include disaster relief, evangelism training, language missions, Christian higher education, collegiate ministries, children's homes ministry, and ethnic church planting. What state convention ministries would you see as expendable so more money could be sent out of the states?



Wright

WRIGHT: I do not think it is my place to tell the state conventions where they should make their cuts. That is going to be a matter of prayerful consideration the state convention leadership will go through in deciding how to prioritize their funds. Let me explain it this way. Over the last two years, for the first time in our history, we have seen a decrease in our budget at Johnson Ferry. We have really had to consider what we needed to focus on and what we could cut out. We put it back on the staff. We didn't have someone go to the children's minister and tell him what things needed to be cut. That's very poor management. We simply said, here's how much money you will have. Now you decide how you are going to prioritize the use of the funds. I think it would be a wonderful, healthy exercise for the state conventions to ask themselves, "How can we best carry out Christ's Great Commission through the states that we are representing with less funds?" And they will have the expertise about where to make those decisions.

SBC LIFE: The situation with our state conventions is a little different than that. They receive the first portion of CP funds. Their messengers instruct them what percentage to send to the national Convention. Plus, many of the states routinely conduct reviews of their ministries. Since the states determine what percentage is forwarded, how would you encourage them, other than just saying that they need to do a very careful study?

WRIGHT: I would hope their priority would be on what is more intentionally Great Commission oriented, in the sense of truly mission-oriented, versus ministry-oriented. I realize sometimes that's very difficult to differentiate.

SBC LIFE: We've mentioned such things as disaster relief, evangelism training, and language missions. So far, I think we're in agreement that these are probably primarily Kingdom-oriented missional enterprises. We can add Christian higher education, collegiate ministries, children's homes ministries, ethnic church plantings, and a litany of others things. Our colleges and universities take a pretty good chunk of CP money at the state level. In terms of your distinction between mission-oriented and ministry-oriented ministries, would you consider Christian higher education as worthy of support?

WRIGHT: I think it is. I'm on the Truett-McConnell board, and the way those kids are coming to Christ and really being discipled at Truett-McConnell, that's very exciting to me. But I think that Baptist institutions of higher learning can no longer be dependent just on the denomination. They're going to have to increase their fundraising. I just really believe that Southern Baptist churches, and especially these younger pastors with the new church plants, would be much more willing to give generously if they saw that more and more of their dollars are really going to unreached people groups and if they saw that the state conventions were keeping less percentage of the dollars. I really believe that, and then you would see more giving to the Cooperative Program for the states if there was more passion about it.

SBC LIFE: What you're saying here is if younger pastors see value added to Cooperative Program contributions — and not just younger pastors, but pastors in general — they would be more inclined to give through the CP. If so, how do we communicate value-added that would cause them to then believe that their contributions are meeting Kingdom purposes?

WRIGHT: I really believe if they saw CP dollars focusing on largely unreached areas where there are few SBC or evangelical churches, they would be more excited about giving to the CP.

SBC LIFE: We hear some churches saying that we need to get everything overseas. The problem is you don't see that in their own budgets. They say we need to send more Cooperative Program money overseas, but they are keeping 95% of their budget in their own communities.

WRIGHT: I don't agree with that approach — and that is what I was trying to share today in the challenge, for local churches to give sacrificially.

SBC LIFE: There seems to be a growing movement to encourage state conventions to go to at least a 50-50 model, 50% in the state and 50% outside the state. If the churches are keeping the bulk of their money for local mission and ministry, wouldn't it be consistent for the states to follow that same strategy?

WRIGHT: I don't think so. I just think the church is a missional agency for that local mission field where God has planted them. The amount of money that is given to denominational missions is a different matter. I just don't think that 55-65% of denominational missions should stay within the state. I think the majority should go to international missions.

SBC LIFE: We are commanded to reach Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and the uttermost. Where do the Judea and Samaria components come in?

WRIGHT: The witness you have for Christ in the southern United States, with so many Southern Baptist churches and so many evangelical churches, versus the witness for Christ in Portland, Oregon, or New York City, San Francisco, Bombay — there's just no comparison. And that's what our burden is at Johnson Ferry. I realize everybody can be different, every local church has to decide if they want to give more to Judea, but where we are in the United States, especially in the southern United States, I feel like there are just so many existing resources for a witness of Christ that we need to focus where there's less witness. I don't look at the local church the same as denominational missions. I think they're two different entities there.

SBC LIFE: Thank you, Bryant, for your time tonight. We pray the Lord will richly bless you and your ministry in the months ahead.

WRIGHT: Thank you. I want to keep putting that word out there encouraging our churches to recapture their first love for the Lord and the lost and to give sacrificially and go to reach the peoples of our world. If the local church becomes passionate about that, that's what really matters.